

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS GROUP

WEEKLY SUMMARY NO. 24

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Volume II

For week ending 14 June 1949

The International Week

"With the CFM in its fourth week, the few remaining hopes of a settlement lay in the possibility of a permanent and effective lifting of the Berlin blockade, relaxation of East-West German trade barriers and possibly some headway toward an Austrian peace treaty. Equally gloomy was the outlook in the Palestine case which might well be headed back to the Security Council in view of the gathering evidence on Israel's aggressive intentions. Senate ratification of the International Wheat Agreement is expected to bring numerous other ratifications in its train. Meanwhile the OEEC is still seeking a compromise on the new 1949-1950 Intra-European Trade Agreement and the division of ERP aid, with the UK the chief opponent of the US point of view.

Western labor organizations face leftwing revolt over WFTU status.
A serious challenge to non-Communist labor leadership in a number of countries outside the Soviet orbit is developing as leftwing unions repudiate their national organizations' decisions to withdraw from the World Federation of Trade Unions. During recent weeks: (1) the Canadian District of the United Public Workers (CIO) and a group of Communist-dominated Australian unions have decided to participate in the 28 June WFTU Congress in Milan; (2) the British Electrical Trades and Civil Service Unions threaten to fight for TUC re-entry into the WFTU; (3) the US International Longshoremen Workers (CIO), strategic west coast maritime union, has rejected the CIO National Committee's withdrawal from the WFTU. Participation in the Milan Congress by any of these leftwing unions, in addition to Western European labor federations still under Communist domination (the French CGT, Italian CGIL and Dutch EVC), would strengthen WFTU's claim to represent a substantial portion of Western labor. The ability of the non-Communist national organizations to meet this challenge will depend largely on what disciplinary action they take against their recalcitrant unions and on how willing the leftwingers may be to face expulsion for failure to comply.

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Possible setback to Western European morale. The cumulative impact of Congressional postponement of the Military Aid Program, substantial cuts in ECA appropriations and a failure of the Council of Foreign Ministers to reduce East-West tension would probably have a damaging effect on the improving morale of Western Europe. The lifting of the Berlin blockade, the stepped-up Soviet "peace offensive" and the convening of the CPM have raised hopes in Europe for a slackening of the cold war tension and a period of stabilization. If these hopes are dashed, there will be a natural public let-down. In the economic field, where Western Europe is anxiously watching signs of an approaching US recession, a Congressional cut in ECA appropriations would be taken as an indication that the US, now midway in the ERP, is already slackening its interest in full implementation of the European Recovery Program. The psychological effect of such a conviction would of itself do much to retard European recovery efforts and thus weaken measures of self-defense. In addition, failure to pass the MAP at this session of Congress would convince many Europeans that US strategy contemplates at best the eventual liberation of Western Europe rather than resistance to initial Soviet aggression. The prospect of eventual liberation holds no attraction for Europeans and widespread attribution of such intentions to the US would deal a staggering blow to European determination to resist the USSR or Communism.

Consequently, it seems clear that the combined psychological effect of these adverse developments would be to weaken European determination to resist and to retard the growing consolidation of a Western European anti-Communist bloc. Some of the momentum of anti-Communist consolidation will have been lost, and a renewed effort at greater cost may be necessary to revive the former spirit. Moreover, the USSR itself, which may be expected to watch closely any indications of US recession and slackening US efforts to build up Western Europe, may be encouraged to continue its aggressive prosecution of the cold war.

Vulnerability of LORAN. Another Soviet attempt to terminate LORAN is anticipated at the current Region One International Telecommunications Union Conference at Geneva. The USSR may employ its eleven-vote bloc in an attempt to have the Conference consider and reject the recommendation of the February LORAN Conference that the service be continued until 1952. Continuation of LORAN is considered extremely important by the US since it is the only long range radio navigational aid giving full coverage of the North Atlantic sea and air routes. It is used extensively by US ships and aircraft and by those of Belgium, Canada, France, Iceland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the UK as well. In view of the strategic value of LORAN to the Atlantic Pact powers, it seems reasonably certain that current US efforts to obtain sufficient voting support for LORAN will be successful.

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US notions of freedom of information making headway. A Sub-commission of the Economic and Social Council has voted to receive and discuss complaints or criticisms against states regarding their information principles or practices, offered by any proper press, information, broadcasting or newsreel association or any member of a professional organization with competence in this field. Identity of complainants will be protected from disclosure at their request, although anonymous complaints are barred. The Soviet delegate opposed the receipt of individual complaints, arguing that no self-respecting government would tolerate such "meddling". Nevertheless, while it would be crass over-optimism to expect Iron Curtain countries to ratify the FOI Convention, knowledge that interference with the free transmission of news can be laid before the UN will tend to bring practices of some non-Communist States which have hitherto followed repressive information policies into line with US concepts.

- 0 -

Czech delegate seeks to undermine UNCIP. Oldrich Chyle, Czech delegate to the UN Commission for India and Pakistan, has recently alienated other Commission members by his overt promotion of Soviet interests through typical delaying tactics. During recent and frequent talks with Sheikh Abdullah, the Kashmir leader, Chyle may have discussed the possibility of an independent Kashmir backed by the Soviet bloc. Despite recent denials, Abdullah primarily seeks Kashmir independence and seems loath to agree to the speedy appointment of a Plebiscite Administrator following the conclusion of a truce. Another link connecting the USSR to Kashmir is the reported trips of persons close to Abdullah back and forth across the northern Kashmir frontier, an escape route for many refugees from Communist areas to the North. In any case, Chyle is informing Abdullah and local Communists of Commission moves. Although the US, Colombian, Argentine and Belgian delegates on the Commission will scarcely be misled by the Czech's tactics, his actions are a hindrance to the Commission's work.

G/IO NOTES

ITU Conference rejects Japan. The US proposal that an official Japanese delegation be seated has been rejected by the Telephone and Telegraph Conference in Paris. Rather than suffer a similar defeat at the Geneva Region Three ITU (International Telecommunications Union) Conference, thereby further prejudicing its case before the subsequent session of the ITU Administrative Council, the Department of State favors withdrawal of the Japanese application.

- 3 -

OSR opposes Bizonal coal price increase. The Office of the ECA Special Representative in Paris strongly opposes the Bizonal's planned increase in coal prices as a major break with the US economic policy of liberalizing trade in Europe. The US has made some progress in its efforts to secure reduction of European coal export prices in order to maximize use of European coal and thus curtail the still substantial use of US solid fuels. OSR fears that the Bizonal increase will undercut the present British, Benelux and Polish trend toward reduction of coal prices to more competitive levels, which is an essential step in European recovery.

Belgium and France oppose West German participation in ILO Conference. France and Belgium have brought unexpected support to recent Polish and Czech efforts to block attendance of West German "observers" at the Geneva International Labor Organization Conference. The French Government delegate urges that admission be postponed in order to avoid a split among the Western Powers on this issue; the Belgian Government representative has indicated that he too will have to oppose admission at this time. Latin American representatives are reportedly ready to abstain. Although the Worker and Employer delegates would probably support admission now, the negative votes and abstentions of most of the Government delegates (including those of Germany's western neighbors) might prove embarrassing to the Western Powers. Postponement of a decision until the end of the Conference (early July), while not likely to please West German labor, would permit the Western Powers to consider this issue without risking Soviet exploitation of their differences while the Council of Foreign Ministers is still in session.

"The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose." A new problem in English-Russian translation has been raised by the erudite Mr. Vishinsky at the CFM. When Secretary Acheson characterized a Soviet proposal as being "as full of propaganda as a dog is full of fleas -- in fact, I think it's all fleas and no dog," Vishinsky invited attention to a Biblical passage (identified by G/IO as Matthew 23:24, "Ye blind guides, who strain at gnats and swallow camels"), which he quoted as "You should not try to catch fleas, lest a camel slip through your fingers." Mr. Bevin impliedly challenged Vishinsky's accuracy by stating that he could not identify the passage in the King James version. Vishinsky quoted his source as the Russian version, translated by St. Vladimir. M. Schuman, with commendable restraint, refrained from citing a French version, suggesting instead that the flea question be referred to the Deputies for appropriate action, possibly so that they could start from scratch.